

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REVIEW

26 January 1961

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NOT RELEVANT
TO BAY OF PIGS

CUBA

With the conclusion of five-year trade and payments agreements with Albania on 19 January, Cuban now has reached such agreements with all 12 Sino-Soviet bloc countries. Tirana was the last stop of a Cuban mission that had been traveling to all bloc capitals since last October. Seven bloc countries --the USSR, Communist China, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria --now have granted Cuba a total of \$245,000,000 in credits. Che Guevara, who headed the mission during the first two months, ne-

gotiated the multilateral payments agreements in Moscow under which the bloc coordinates its economic relations with Cuba.

The counselor of the Yugoslav Embassy in Moscow, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] reflected his government's disappointment with developments in Cuba and flatly stated that "Cuba now is just a Soviet satellite." He said the Yugoslav Government had been sympathetic to Castro early in his regime, but that relations have become

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progressively cooler with the steady growth of Soviet influence in Cuba.

The volume and tenor of Soviet propaganda on Cuba has declined over the past week, but a number of press items have appeared reporting "solidarity-with-Cuba meetings" in various Soviet factories.

Meanwhile, Latin American governments are considering means of dealing with the Cuban problem. Although six of them had already broken or suspended diplomatic relations with the Castro regime before the United States took this step on 3 January, most of the others feel that further steps should be the result of a multilateral decision through the Organization of American States (OAS). Nevertheless, Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, and Uruguay have in recent weeks either expelled Cuban ambassadors or announced the withdrawal of their ambassadors from Havana. Several governments have urged an early special meeting of foreign ministers to deal with the Cuban problem.

Panama, which had privately offered to be host for such a meeting, sent two cabinet ministers to Costa Rica in mid-January to seek support for such a move. Apparently, however, Costa Rican President Echandi opposed pressing for a meeting now and favored adding the Cuban problem to the agenda of the 11th Inter-American Conference, now scheduled to open in Quito on 24 May. The Costa Rican and Panamanian leaders are also reported to have agreed to ask other Latin American countries how they felt about jointly breaking with the Castro government. Echandi reportedly said he intended to request the permanent recall of the Cuban ambassador to Costa Rica, now in Havana on consultation.

The resumption of executions of anti-Castro activists in Cuba, including students and labor unionists, has aroused the majority of the diplomatic corps in Havana.

reported a meeting of the diplomatic corps on 21 January at the initiation of the papal nuncio to consider a joint demarche to the Cuban Government for clemency. The Belgian predicted that the majority of the corps would support such a demarche, particularly the Latin American and Western European missions. They apparently did so at a second meeting on 23 January. However, the Sino-Soviet embassies declined to attend the meetings, and the Yugoslav and UAR representatives were "passive", according to .

A report from a usually reliable source in Cuba indicates that the Latin American missions remaining in Havana had initiated the action. While this diplomatic pressure is unlikely to have any notable success, continued violations of human rights by the regime will further harden Latin American opinion against Castro.

On the domestic scene, the Cuban Government and its controlled press and radio continue the "wait-and-see" attitude toward the new administration in Washington adopted in Fidel Castro's 20 January speech. Cuban militiamen, mobilized to resist the "invasion" Cubans had been told to expect momentarily since 31 December, were sent back to their jobs. Cubans are being told that they have won a "bloodless battle" against "imperialism" and must now fight to win the "battles" of production and against illiteracy.

On 21 and 22 January, Fidel Castro met with officers of the

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National Agrarian Reform Institute (INRA). "Production goals" for 1961 were set, and Castro subsequently announced several plans for agriculture in the coming year, including the establishment of special tracts on each cooperative farm for the training of children. He also announced plans for an exchange program under which 1,000 young Soviet farmers would come to Cuba and Cuban youths would go to the USSR "to increase the knowledge of our farmers."

At least two public anti-Castro demonstrations have occurred in the past several days. On 17 January, a demonstration by about 350 electrical workers who had been fired from their jobs for participating in an anti-Communist demonstration last month quickly snowballed into a protest march by over a thousand workers before it was dispersed by Communist-led goon squads and the police in what one witness described as a "long and violent melée." A second demonstration by some 100 women carrying signs saying "end the executions of our sons" was dispersed by the police in front of the presidential palace on 23 January.

An earlier attempt by students to protest the executions of their fellow students is believed to have resulted in par-

tial student strikes in some cities outside of Havana. Castro, in a 24 January speech, reiterated his vow to subject anti-government activists to "the most implacable persecution imaginable."

confirm press reports of a major government effort against guerrilla bands in the Escambray Mountains of Las Villas Province.

sizable movements by militia forces both into and within Las Villas and

casualties sustained by the guerrillas.

A usually reliable source with excellent contacts in opposition circles reported on 18 January that anti-Castro forces in the Escambray Mountains had found the following message on a captured militiaman: "Things are going very badly.... We have many deserters. Almost all the militiamen have deserted." The source believes the message was probably a copy of a communication between government units operating in the area. Government forces may well have suffered some local setbacks in the area, and the willingness of the "volunteer" militiamen to fight against odds has been questioned by American service attachés recently returned from Cuba.

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